

# PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT MATTERS

## DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT & BUDGET

Fairfax County, Virginia

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## HIGH PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATIONS

If someone asked you whether your agency is a high performance organization, what would you say? If you answered no, chances are you would be expected to explain. However, if you answered yes, could you back up that response? There are four key questions we should all be asking:

- What is high performance for us?
- How would we know if we are high performance?
- According to whom are we high performance?
- Why do we want to be high performance in the first place?

The 21st Century brings even higher expectations for both the public and private sectors. Neither can afford to be complacent. The new century is unique in its unprecedented combination of complexity and change that affect virtually everyone. It used to be that customers could possibly have both quality and customer value, but not financial performance (cost-efficiency) as well. Or they could have cost-efficiency, but not quality. Customers could pick one or two of the characteristics but not all three. Today high performance is seen as having all three. Fairfax County's performance measurement system is based on this expectation held by taxpayers and other stakeholders.

However, saying you will do something and actually doing it are two different things. This is where performance measurement comes in. For over three years, Fairfax County has focused on a balanced picture of performance – not just quantity, but quality, cost-efficiency, and results (customer value). Managers should be looking at the four types of indicators – output, efficiency, service quality, and outcome in order to determine how well their organizations are performing and where improvements are needed, as well as take

steps to enhance performance. The truly successful organization has found a way to use this information, not as an end, but as a means to higher performance.

## UPDATE ON ICMA COMPARATIVE PERFORMANCE EFFORT

If you read the October 2000 edition of *Performance Measurement Matters*, you are aware that Fairfax County has joined the International City and County Management Association's (ICMA) Center for Performance Measurement (CPM). The CPM was started in 1994 by a group of 44 city and county managers who wanted to be able to compare their jurisdictions' performance in a systematic manner. That group is now up to 120 local governments that are committed to benchmarking and improving their services.

As the first step in participating, staff from Fairfax County agencies whose services are benchmarked, were trained in September 2000. They then completed standardized templates for their service areas. This was challenging the first time because in some cases, Fairfax County does not collect the data specified or may not be collecting it in the format requested by ICMA. However, staff made a strong effort to provide as much data as possible, realizing that more can be provided in future years. In some cases, agencies noted data that they were not presently collecting, but which they see value for future efforts. These agencies are currently working on a data collection plan for the next template in the fall of 2001.

Agencies submitted their data to the Department of Management and Budget for review by the Primary Coordinator, Barbara Emerson, whose job it is to check the submissions for internal consistency and to serve as a liaison with ICMA for questions/comments. Despite having 15 templates to complete and being a first-time submitter, Fairfax County was still able to meet ICMA's

deadline of November 15, 2000 for jurisdictions whose fiscal year ends on June 30. Data submitted covered FY 2000.

The next step will be when ICMA places the initial data collected on its private website. This will not include all data as local governments whose fiscal year ends in December have until March 2001 to submit their data, which will then be cleaned and compiled with data submitted in the fall for inclusion in the FY 2000 Data Report. Participating agencies received passwords to ICMA's private site so that they may check data posted and ask questions of other participants. The objective of this effort is to have local governments share information on how high performers are achieving those levels of performance. The agencies listed below, as well as the Department of Systems Management for Human Services, which provided demographic data, deserve a lot of credit for their hard work and dedication in completing the first templates for Fairfax County. Agencies whose services are not currently benchmarked may have the opportunity to participate in the ICMA effort in future years if enough members agree to add a template for those areas. However, this in no way precludes any agency from comparing its performance externally. All should be engaged in some type of benchmarking to ascertain if they are in fact high performers.

### ICMA Benchmarking Participants

Human Resources  
Information Technology  
Vehicle Services  
Purchasing and Supply Management  
Facilities Management  
Risk Management  
Fire Department  
Police Department  
Sheriff's Office  
Juvenile and Domestic Relations Court  
Family Services  
Health Department  
Community Services Board  
Public Works & Environmental Services  
Planning & Zoning  
Housing & Community Development  
Park Authority  
Community & Recreation Services  
Public Library  
Refuse Collection & Recycling



## ON IMAGINATION

You can't depend on your eyes when your imagination is out of focus.

— Mark Twain

## Calendar of Performance Measurement Events for 2001

As we begin 2001, it is useful to have a prospective look at upcoming events related to Performance Measurement (PM). The PM Team has made some changes to how we are going to conduct training and brownbag lunches. Both will be continued; however, the four-course series will be offered twice — in both May and August to hopefully fit into the schedules of those who may need this training. Attendees are

welcome to attend any or all of the four classes. For example, you may already have taken the Basic and Surveying classes, but want to take Data Collection and Managing for Results. You need only sign up for the courses you need. Registration will be announced through an e-mail broadcast approximately four weeks before each class. Another change is that brownbag lunches will not be held

bimonthly, but rather in February, June, and October as we have found these times to be the more convenient for staff to attend based on past trends. The PM Team is constantly seeking input if there are other areas of interest. The Team is comprised of 17 members from 15 different agencies. Feel free to contact any one of the members listed below if you have questions or comments.

Barbara Emerson, Coordinator .....	Management & Budget .....	324-3009
Evan Braff .....	Community & Recreation Services .....	324-5650
Mike Finkle .....	Housing & Community Development .....	246-5262
Laura Golberg .....	Information Technology .....	324-4117
Norman Graves .....	Tax Administration .....	324-4625
Liz Henry .....	Family Services .....	324-7889
Susan Herbert .....	Fire & Rescue .....	246-3889
Chuck Higdon .....	Vehicle Services .....	324-3539
Rose Hill-Evans .....	Finance .....	324-2802
George Hohmann .....	Management & Budget .....	324-4078
Ed Jones .....	Sewer System .....	324-5028
Doug Miller .....	Public Library .....	324-8322
Chuck Peters .....	Police .....	246-4201
Laurie Shertzer .....	Fire & Rescue .....	246-3284
Liz Smolen .....	Solid Waste Division .....	324-5043
Cathy Spage .....	Public Works & Environmental Services .....	324-1832
Steve Springer .....	Human Resources .....	324-3353

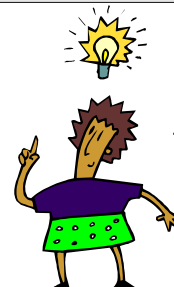
PM Events for 2001		
EVENT	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
Brownbag Lunch	February 8, 2001 / Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Basic PM Training	May 3, 2001 / 8:30-11:30 a.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Data Collection	May 3, 2001 / 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Surveying for Customer Satisfaction	May 4, 2001 / 8:30-11:30 a.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Managing for Results	May 4, 2001 / 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Brownbag Lunch	June 7, 2001 / Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC
Basic PM Training	August 15, 2001 / 8:30-11:30 a.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Data Collection	August 15, 2001 / 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Surveying for Customer Satisfaction	August 16, 2001 / 8:30-11:30 a.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Managing for Results	August 16, 2001 / 1-4:00 p.m.	CR 2-3, GC
Brownbag Lunch	October 4, 2001 / Noon – 1 p.m.	Room 120C, GC

### Visit the PM Website:

<http://infoweb.co.fairfax.va.us/OMB/pfmeasure.htm>



*Performance Measurement Matters* is published quarterly by the PM Team. Editor: Barbara Emerson, Technical Support by Frann Shurnitski, Department of Management and Budget. Advisory staff: Sara Simmons, Department of Planning and Zoning.



### ON THOUGHT

Thought without action is futile. Action without thought is fatal.

— James Colvard